

Dorothy Maguire and the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League

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Women's Intellectual History - Fall 2023



League History

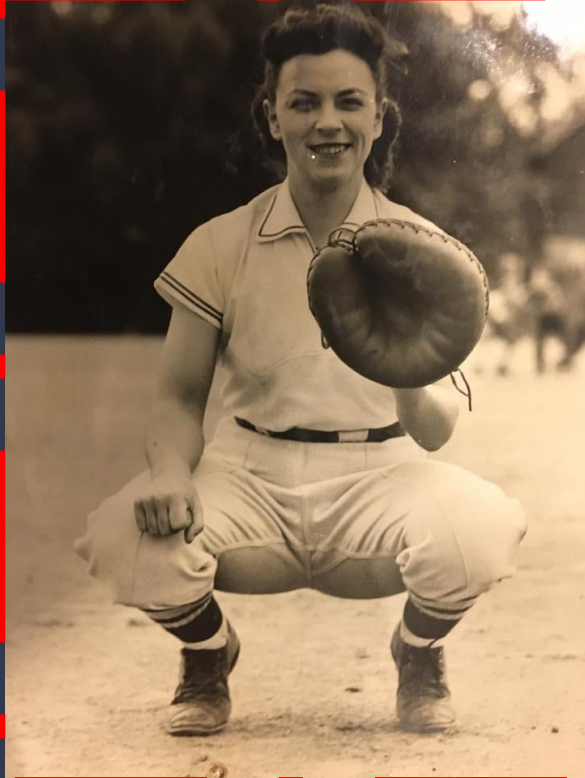
- Men's baseball was in poor condition during World War II
- The league (operating from 1943-1954) was started by Philip K. Wrigley
- The first season featured four teams: Racine Bells, South Bend Blue Sox, Kenosha Comets, and Rockford Peaches
 - League functioned primarily in the midwest
- "All-American" image, used nonprofit setup to establish respectability and community morale around the league
- With that, there were policies and practices that were inevitably misogynistic
 - Ex: Charm school, skirted uniforms, appearance standards, behavioral rules
 - At the time, there was no baseball equipment for women
- Each team had a chaperone
 - Allowed many young women to play who otherwise couldn't
 - Called "surrogate mothers" in histories of the league

League History



- The league found success, expanding after its first year
- Many were surprised that these “girls” could play ball
- Increases in attendance even after the war
- Cuban Campaign
 - Establishment of the Latin American Feminine Baseball League (LAFBBL)
 - Cuban players joined teams
 - Continued exhibition tours
 - Allowed the women to travel and discover other cultures
- The league had three administrative structures: Trustee Administration, Management Corporation, and Independent Team Owners
 - Financial problems
 - Decline in advertising and promotion
- Final season in 1954
- Many women were able to use their earnings to pursue education and other endeavors

Dorothy Maguire



- Born November 21, 1918 in LaGrange, Ohio
- Raised on a farm, which began her love of horses
- Worked for Erin Brew and played softball for their team
- Tried out and became one of the first 60 players
 - Racine Bells - 1943 League Champions



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DOROTHY MAGUIRE

catcher - outfield

Born: 11/21/18
LaGrange, OH
Height: 5'5"
Weight: 140
Batted: Right
Threw: Right

BATTING RECORD													
YEAR	TEAM	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	BB	SO	AVG
1943	Racine	70	219	34	59	5	4	0	33	29	11	7	.269
1944	Milwaukee	109	361	40	69	2	5	1	29	53	24	14	.191
1945	Grand Rapids	99	327	35	52	6	2	0	20	27	41	28	.159
1946	Muskegon	101	340	42	74	7	4	1	47	57	47	18	.218
1947	Muskegon	75	232	28	50	6	1	0	24	27	22	14	.216
1948	Muskegon	124	373	40	58	3	0	1	30	47	56	58	.155
1949	Muskegon	17	54	3	8	1	0	0	2	3	5	10	.148
Total		595	1906	222	370	30	16	3	185	243	206	149	.194

Dorothy answered to "Mickey" because her style of play mirrored that of Hall of Famer Mickey Cochrane. During her seven years she played on three championship clubs: Racine in 1943, Milwaukee in 1944 and Muskegon in 1947. She passed away on 8/2/81.

© 1995 Larry Fritsch Cards

Official Baseball Card Of The AAGPBL - Players Association



Playing Career

- Drove a taxi cab in the off-season
- One of the older players, she helped coaches and chaperones
- Phone call that inspired a scene in "A League of Their Own"
- Nicknamed "Mickey" after Detroit Tigers HOF catcher Mickey Cochrane
- One of the highest-paid players in the league
- Stories from those who knew her:
 - Holding onto balls
 - Thrown out of a game for stepping on an umpire's shoes
 - Helped pitchers as style changed
- Key word: tough
- Played her final season in 1949

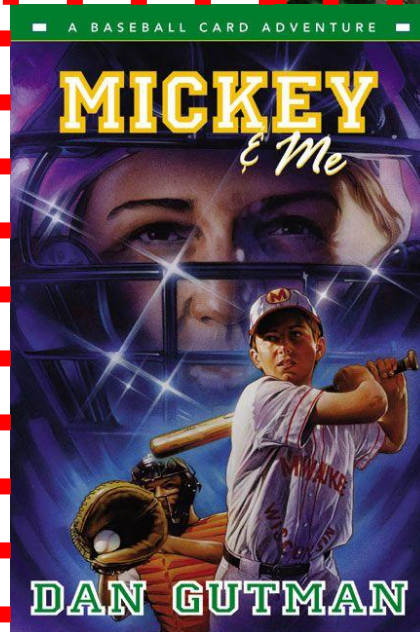
Life After Baseball



- Remarried, had 6 children, was divorced
- Didn't talk much of her career, but did teach her kids how to play
 - "I played ball"
- Prominent horsewoman in Ohio
 - July 1966 cover of *Morgan Horse Magazine*
 - Chico's Flame - 1963 Grand Champion of Ohio
 - Kept showing even after breaking her leg
- Died August 2, 1981

Dorothy's Legacy

- "Woman at Bat" statue
 - Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, Ohio
 - Dedicated May 14, 2006 (Mother's Day)
- *Mickey and Me* by Dan Gutman
- Member of the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame



Continuing the Legacy of the AAGPBL

- 80th anniversary (1943-2023)
 - Reunion held in August in Kenosha, WI
- All-American Girls Professional Baseball League Players' Association
 - Reunions
 - Work to document the history (museums, scholars, etc.)
- Largely forgotten piece of history
- About 41 players are still living today
 - Only a handful can still attend reunions



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All other photos not cited are courtesy of Rick Chapman. Special thanks to Rick and George Chapman, who I interviewed about their mother.